

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (canceled).
2. (previously presented): The method according to Claim 8, characterized in that the stiffening means comprises a profiled part (74) formed as an integral part of the first sheet (5; 88).
3. (previously presented): The method according to Claim 2, characterized in that the profiled part (74) is formed by bending the first sheet (5; 88) away from the zone (6; 89) of overlap, close thereto.
4. (previously presented): The method according to Claim 2, characterized in that the profiled part is a thickened part of the first sheet (5; 88).
5. (currently amended): The method according to Claim 8, characterized in that a laser beam (52) emitted by the welding installation (2) passes through the second sheet (4; 87) to weld it to the first sheet (5; 88) at those of their surfaces which face one another in the zone (6; 89) of overlap, the method thus constituting a laser transparency-welding method.
6. (previously presented): A railway vehicle body (81) comprising at least one support framework (840) and an external skin (86), the external skin (86) comprising a collection of sheets (87; 88) welded together at zones (89) of overlap and welded to the support framework

(840), characterized in that welds connecting the sheets of the skin together are produced by the method according to Claim 8.

7. (previously presented): A railway vehicle body (81) comprising at least one support framework (840) and an external skin (86), the external skin (86) comprising a collection of sheets (87; 88) welded together at zones (89) of overlap and welded to the support framework (840), characterized in that welds connecting the sheets of the skin together are produced by the method according to Claim 5.

8. (currently amended): A method of laser welding at least first and second sheets, the method comprising the steps of:

placing the sheets one above another along a zone of overlap of the sheets such that at least ~~one~~ a first region of the first sheet projects, cantilever fashion, into the zone of overlap, wherein at least the first of the sheets comprises, near the zone of overlap, stiffening means designed to resist the bending of the first sheet along the zone of overlap, the stiffening means being located near the cantilevered region;

pressing a pressing mechanism of a laser welding installation against a second region of the second sheet facing the first region of the first sheet so as to hold the sheets in contact with one another in said zone of overlap while maintaining said first region cantilevered; and
welding the sheets together along said zone of overlap.